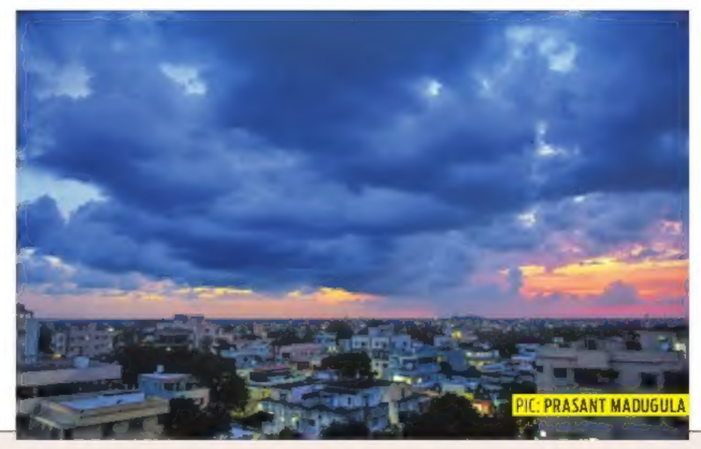
THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • MONDAY • OCTOBER 27, 2025 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 18 • LATE CITY EDITION



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CYCLONE MONTHA TO HIT ANDHRA COAST TOMORROW, SAYS MET OFFICE

The deep depression over the southeast Bay of Bengal is very likely to cross the Andhra Pradesh coast near Kakinada on Tuesday evening, it said

EXPECTED TO BECOME SEVERE CYCLONIC STORM

"Yesterday's depression over the southeast Bay of Bengal intensified into a deep depression at 0530 hrs IST today, October 26, 2025, over the same region," the meteorological department said on Sunday. The system is expected to further intensify into a severe cyclonic storm by the morning of October 28 and cross the Andhra Pradesh coast by evening, it said | P7

ODISHA, BENGAL BRACE FOR HEAVY RAINFALL

- The IMD warned of 'extremely heavy rainfal' in south Odisha on 28th and 29th. The Odisha government has put all 30 districts on alert
- Heavy rain is expected in south Bengal districts of North and South 24 Parganas, Purba and Paschim Medinipur, Jhargram, Howrah, Purulia, Purba and Paschim Bardhaman, Birbhum and Murshidabad

110 km/hr

IS THE MAXIMUM WINDSPEED EXPECTED WHEN THE STORM HITS THE COAST

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

21st century belongs to India and ASEAN: PM

Reaffirms the bloc as a key pillar of India's Act East Policy; 2026 declared ASEAN-India year of maritime security

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the 21st century "belongs to India and ASEAN", asserting that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations remains a central pillar of India's Act East Policy and a vital partner in shaping an inclusive and sustainable Indo-Pacific.

Delivering his opening remarks at the India-ASEAN summit in Malaysia virtually, Modi said India and ASEAN together represent nearly one-fourth of the world's population, bound not just by geography but also by "deep historical ties, shared values, and a common vision for the Global South".

"We are not only commercial partners but also cultural companions," Modi said, reaffirming India's support for ASEAN centrality and its Indo-Pacific outlook. "Even amid global uncertainties, our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership has made steady progress and is emerging as a strong foundation for global stability and development... The 21st century is our century — the century of India and ASEAN," he said. "The ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and India's goal of Viksit Bharat 2047 will together shape a bright future for humanity."

The prime minister highlighted that the summit's theme, Inclusivity and Sustainability, mirrors India-ASEAN priorities, from digital inclusion and resilient supply chains to food security and green energy.

"India fully supports these priorities and is committed to advancing them together," Modi added.

Talking about the growing collaboration in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and maritime security, Modi announced that 2026 will be celebrated as the 'ASEAN–India Year of Maritime Cooperation', marking an intensified push for joint work in the blue economy and ocean governance.

He said that the partnership now extends across education, tourism, science and technology, health, green energy, and cyber security, while also emphasising shared efforts to preserve cultural heritage and deepen people-to-people ties.

The 10-member ASEAN bloc, with a population of about 680 million and a combined GDP of over $3.9 trillion, is the world's fifth-largest economy if treated as a single entity. Timor-Leste became the 11th member of ASEAN on Sunday.

India counts ASEAN among its top trading partners, alongside China, the US, the EU, Japan, and South Korea.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually addresses the 'India-ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Annual Summit' via video conferencing, in New Delhi | PTI

EAST TIMOR ADMITTED AS NEW MEMBER

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Sunday welcomed East Timor, also known as Timor Leste, as its newest member. It was ASEAN's first expansion since the 1990s. Meanwhile, Cambodia and Thailand signed a pact expanding a ceasefire on their borders | P11

US ties with Pakistan not at India's expense: Rubio

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

THE US is looking to expand its strategic partnership with Pakistan but not at the cost of its 'deep' relationship with India, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said, in an apparent bid to calm concerns in New Delhi over Washington's renewed outreach to Islamabad.

Speaking to reporters, Rubio stressed that both India and the US maintain independent relationships with different nations, terming it "part of a mature, pragmatic foreign policy."

"Just like India has ties with countries that the US doesn't, the vice-versa applies," Rubio said, adding: "I don't think anything we're doing with Pakistan comes at the expense of our relationship or friendship with India, which is deep, historic, and important."

Rubio is expected to meet External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday on the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur. It will be the fourth in-person meeting between the two leaders this year, a sign of high-level engagement continuing despite friction over trade and energy issues.

The Jaishankar–Rubio meeting is expected to cover trade negotiations and India's continued imports of Russian oil, a major friction point for the Trump administration.

The Secretary of State's comments come amid Washington's efforts under US President Donald Trump to recalibrate ties with Pakistan including deals on critical mineral mining and energy cooperation, a move that has raised eyebrows among the policy makers in New Delhi. Trump's administration has also maintained high tariffs of 50% on key Indian exports, while Islamabad continues to enjoy preferential treatment in some sectors.

Rubio defended the US engagement with Pakistan as an attempt to "rebuild a strategic partnership," citing past cooperation on counterterrorism. "We're fully aware of the challenges with regard to India and everything else," he said. "But our job is to create opportunities for partnerships where possible," he added.

EC to release schedule of pan-India roll revision today

MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

THE Election Commission of India (ECI) will announce the schedule for the nationwide Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls on Monday, sources said.

The ECI is holding a media briefing on Monday afternoon, which will be attended by Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi.

According to ECI sources, the poll panel will announce the schedule during the briefing. The exercise will be conducted in two phases, sources said. The first phase will cover more than 10 states and one Union Territory, including the election-bound states of Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal and Puducherry, they said.

"The SIR is likely to be rolled out in two phases. The first phase will include Assam, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and West Bengal, where Assembly elections are due in 2026," a source said, adding: "The second phase will cover states that are holding local body elections and where severe winter weather may create challenges for the electoral revision process."

The sources said the first phase will begin on 1 November, and all the Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of the states and the Union Territory covered in this phase have been told to remain alert, as work may start at any moment.

The ECI recently reviewed the readiness of all states and Union Territories for the nationwide SIR during a two-day conference of Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs), which concluded in New Delhi last Thursday.

ON THE PROWL

Tiger mauls farmer to death in Mysuru dist

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

A tiger mauled a farmer to death at Sargur taluk of Mysuru district on Sunday. The incident occurred just two weeks after another farmer was attacked by a tiger.

The victim, identified as Rajashekar Murthy, was killed by the tiger in a farm located between Mulluru Hundi and Bennegere villages in Hediyala hobli near Chikkadevamma Hill around 1 pm. Murthy and his fellow farmer Siddaramaegowda (50) had gone to harvest tomatoes at Bennegere village. After completing their work, they were heading home for lunch when the tiger, hiding in the bushes, attacked them.

While Siddaramaegowda managed to escape, Rajashekar was mauled by the tiger and he died on the spot because of severe injuries on the face. P5

CJ, LAWYERS' REQUEST

HC MAY BE SHIFTED, GOVT LOOKING FOR LAND IN CBD: DKS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka High Court, currently functioning from Attara Kacheri -- a heritage building constructed in 1868, is likely to be relocated because of space constraints. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said the state government is looking at 15-20 acres of land to move the High Court to a new location within the Central Business District (CBD).

After his Walk with Bengaluru programme in Cubbon Park on Sunday, Shivakumar told the media, "At the celebration of 25 years of Nyayamitra Cooperative Bank on Saturday, lawyers and the Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court requested for 15-20 acres of land to relocate the High Court due to space constraints."

He said the state government is looking for land within the CBD, and discussions are on for space near Race Course Road, while other suggestions of officials too are being considered. The High Court cannot be shifted outside the city as it has to be within the CBD and should be easily accessible to lawyers, judges and others. The location should also have convenient transport facilities, he added.

"Since the existing building (Attara Kacheri) is a heritage structure, no modification can be done. We will sort out the problem of shifting the High Court, as it is a big issue," he added. P2

DCM DK Shivakumar interacts with walkers during the 'Walk with Bengaluru' event at Cubbon Park on Sunday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

Since the existing building (Attara Kacheri) is a heritage structure, no modification can be done

DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

EXPRESS READ

Russia targets Kyiv with drones, killing 3

KYIV: Russia targeted Ukraine's capital with drones, killing three people in their homes, authorities said on Sunday, adding that at least 29 people were wounded in the attack.

Pilots warn of fatigue as DGCA extends duty time

NEW DELHI: The pilots' body on Sunday urged the DGCA to withdraw the flight duty time extension for two-pilot Boeing 787 Dreamliners, warning it could lead to fatigue-induced errors | P9

RSS man in health trust, Congress leaders want CM to remove him

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Congress government, which has banned RSS activities on government premises, is at the receiving end from its own party members as it has appointed an RSS man as the trustee of 'Yeshasvini Cooperative Members' Health Protection Trust'.

The cooperation department, in its order on October 23, has picked Dr Sridhar, head of Kumar Hospital in Tiptur, as one of 13 trustees of the board.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is the chief patron of the trust as he handles the cooperation portfolio too, while the secretary of the cooperation department is the chairperson. Sridhar is among five specialist doctors on the board.

Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee member CB Shashidhar wrote to the CM on Sunday, requesting that the order be withdrawn to save Congress and its workers from the embarrassment. He also drew the attention of DCM and KPCC president DK Shivakumar. "On October 12, Dr Sridhar had taken part in the RSS path sanchalan with 'ganaveshadhari' dress," he said.

He alleged that Tiptur MLA K Shadakshari had recommended Dr Sridhar's name to be appointed as trustee.

EXPRESS INTAKE

K'taka-TN water row solved naturally this year: DKS | P6

Karnool bus fire: Biker was drunk, confirms FSL | P7

NATURE'S CUT

U'khand to greet out-of-state vehicles with green tax from Dec

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

TOURISTS and pilgrims driving into Uttarakhand will soon be greeted not just by its scenic mountains, but also by a new 'green cess'.

The state government has finalised plans to roll out a mandatory fee on all vehicles entering the hill state from other regions from December.

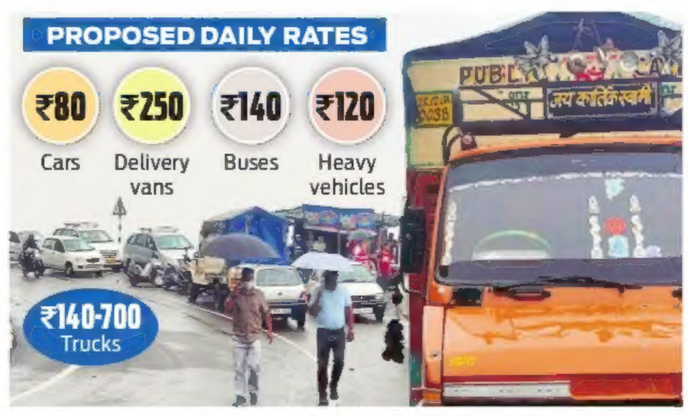
The decision aims to generate revenue specifically for environmental protection and infrastructure improvement within the ecologically sensitive Himalayan state. The objective is to balance booming tourism with fragile mountain ecology.

"Starting December 2025, a Green Cess will be collected from vehicles entering Uttarakhand from other states," said S K Singh, Additional Commissioner of the Transport Department. He added that the fee collection will be automated, deducted directly via the vehicle's existing FASTag system.

To ensure seamless monitoring of the collection process, the state has installed Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras at 16 strategic entry points. The Transport Department anticipates that the cess could yield an estimated annual revenue ranging between ₹100 crore and ₹150 crore. The entire automated system is being managed through a contract with a private firm to maintain transparency.

However, not all vehicles will be subject to the new tax. Exempted vehicles include two-wheelers, electric and CNG vehicles, government vehicles, ambulances and fire brigade trucks. Furthermore, vehicles re-entering the state within a 24-hour window will not be charged the Green Cess a second time.

According to the department, the revenue generated will be utilised for "air pollution control, road safety improvements and urban transport development".



Starting December 2025, a Green Cess will be collected from vehicles entering Uttarakhand from other states

S K Singh, Additional Commissioner of the Transport Department